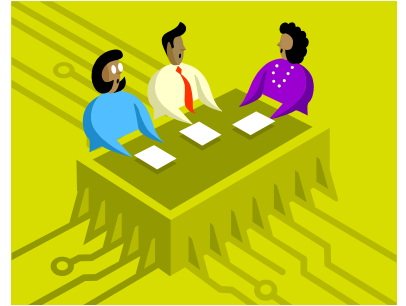


Tips To Develop Listening Skills

Developing listening skills are very important for various reasons. Here are some of the many benefits you get out of becoming a good listener.

Benefits of being a good listener:

1. When you listen to the other person with full attention, it shows that you are giving respect to the person. By giving the person respect, you gain his respect and love.
2. The other person in turn will listen carefully to what you have got to say.
3. You can improve relationships with people by being a good and sympathetic listener to their concerns and problems.
4. Listening skills help in improving conversation skills, and you can avoid many confusions, misunderstandings and conflicts if only you develop the willingness to lend more attentive ears to the speaker.



Now that you know some of the benefits of listening skills, read below a few tips to help you become a good listener:

1. Be willing to become a good listener:

In order to become a good listener, the first step is to develop the willingness. If you are not willing to do something you will not make the effort. In order to develop willingness, understand the benefits of becoming a good listener. Read the above benefits and try to realize their importance.

2. Respect the other person:

Unless you respect the other person, you will be unwilling to lend an attentive ear to him/her. If you develop the habit of respecting everyone, you may find that people start respecting you more too. In addition to respect, also try to develop genuine interest and liking for people. This will add warmth to your interactions with them.

3. Focus completely on the speaker:

Focus on the speaker and what is being said rather than thinking or composing your own reply, otherwise you will miss many of the things the speaker is saying.

4. Face the speaker, nod your head and provide visual cues that you are paying attention to him/her.

5. Don't interrupt: Let the speaker finish his statement before you reply. If you want to interrupt the speaker or raise a point, be patient till you get a chance.

6. Give oral encouragements like "I see", "I understand", "I agree" etc. which will send signals to the speaker that you are really listening to him or her.

7. Occasionally summarize and repeat back in your own words what you understand of what they're saying so that they know you're hearing them and also to prevent any misunderstandings and confusion. Summarizing what you have understood of the other person can help in confirming that you have got the message correctly, or else - if you had misunderstood the message the other person can correct his/her stand immediately.

8. If you wish to remember a certain piece of information which the speaker is saying, repeat it back immediately and aloud. Then, as soon as its convenient, write down that information which you want to remember.

9. While at a conference, take notes.

This will help you in remembering key information. The notes can also be helpful for discussions at that meeting.

10. Even if the speaker becomes silent for some time or is thinking of something, don't try to rush and fill up the silence. Give the speaker a chance to compose his/her thought.

11. Ask questions:

Asking questions is a very effective way of showing that you are paying attention. It also helps in keeping the conversation alive and can provide opportunity for further discussions on a particular topic.

12. Try to be relaxed:

Whether you are standing or sitting, try to be relaxed and comfortable so that you can pay better attention to the speaker. If you feel discomfort, then it is likely to distract your attention.

13. Give proper feedback:

People sometimes would be interested in your opinion about a topic. Provide an honest feedback whenever you are asked or where it is appropriate.

14. Develop interest in the other person:

Become curious about the person with whom you are talking. Being curious

about another person helps to validate that person as interesting. On the other hand, showing indifference will give the impression that the speaker is uninteresting and boring. By becoming curious about the other person, you will find that most of the above mentioned listening tips come automatically to you.

15. While asking questions, try not to ask more than one question at a time. Give him/her chance to respond to one question before throwing another one at him/her.

When Should You Stop Listening?

You also need to know when to stop listening. Having good listening skills does not mean that you allow others to waste too much of your time, or encourage them to indulge in useless gossip, running down other people or complaining of life's problems etc. You have to know when to stop encouraging the person if he/she crosses reasonable limits.

<http://simple-fix.blogspot.com/2007/02/tips-to-develop-listening-skills.html>